

"Your State-enacted rights and privileges are meaningless ; we will no longer discuss politics with you, we are going to stop supplying you with the means by which you oppress us. We have given you power, not by our votes, but by supplying you with food ; by building your mansions, castles, prisons and universities ; and by subjecting our reasons and our wills to the discipline of your blood-stained armies. We have kept you, and clothed you, and now you, *our dependents*, talk of granting us the right to work, dare to speak of housing us and feeding our children, insult us by sheltering our babies while their mothers are slaves in the factories we have built. We, the people, *your masters*, will no longer build Houses of Parliament in which you discuss the problem of permitting us to build hovels for ourselves. The houses we build shall be for those we love, not for those who mock and despise or pity us. The factories we have built shall be ours, for we will no longer keep you ; and when you cowardly parasites, exploiters, politicians turn for aid, as you always do, to your hirelings, the police and the army, they will be weak on your side and all power on ours, for the men of our future armies shall stand shoulder to shoulder with the miners of Featherstone and the strikers of Belfast."

—Editorial in *Freedom*, March, 1910.

"In politics, as in every other branch of war, the entire armoury of spies, treachery, stratagem, and deceit of every kind is utilised to gain the one-important end—victory in the fight. And it is precisely because our modern democracy is engaged, year in and year out, in this most unscrupulous warfare that the basic and all-essential virtues of truth, honesty, and the spirit of fair play have almost disappeared.

"The Socialists—the self-styled 'Scientific Socialists,' if you please—think they have done a wonderfully clever thing in plunging into this most demoralizing strife. We Anarchists, on the other hand, are well satisfied to maintain a position in which we can investigate freely and tell the people with absolute fidelity the truth of our investigations ; in which we are not forced to lie that we may curry favour ; in which we have no party to bolster up by all and every means, and no frenzied dreams of power to distract us from realities."—Wm. C. Owen.

## LYING POLITICIANS.

*Politicians are a set of men who have interests aside from the interests of the people and who, to say the most of them, are, taken as a mass, at least one long step removed from honest men. I say this with the greater freedom because, being a politician myself, none can regard it as personal.—Abraham Lincoln.*

WE have just passed through one of those periods during which political discussion and action become part of the life of the community. The honourable gentlemen of Westminster have come down from on high and spoken with the people, while we have had presented to us the remarkable spectacle of richly-upholstered and powerful motor-cars, made by the workers, being for a few brief minutes used by the workers—used by them to sanction once more the power of the masters. The secret ballot, our much-boasted guarantee of *freedom*, has again been operative, operative to organise *government*. Briefly, the political silly season has been in full swing. Christmas brought us the pantomime of a General Election, as well as that of the older and more innocent fairy tales.

He is a superficial observer, however, who does not see that the comedy and pageantry of a pantomime depend for their existence directly upon the appalling tragedy of life. Similarly, though there is much humour in an election, he is a thoughtless man who does not at such times feel a deep sense of humiliation when he thinks in what these honourable gentlemen have traded to buy their comfortable positions as the guardians of society.

There is no need for the Anarchist to prove the lies of the politicians, as fortunately the rogues invariably fall out,



and honest men then have ample opportunity to make a study of the methods adopted by them. So completely, indeed, have they exposed each other, that a politician has become in the public mind as surely associated with the art of lying, as the sun is connected with the light of day.

There may be honour among thieves, or even lawyers, bishops or judges, but there is none among politicians. It seems that the man who seeks a seat in Parliament, or is bent on seeing his party get into power, will stop at nothing.

Poverty and starvation, words which truly express the most depressing and deepest tragedy that the greatness of the human race has been able to create—a terrible reality to the people—are for him expressions only significant in so far as they are a means by which he can obtain the support of the people in his efforts to become a Member of Parliament, and gain notoriety and fame.

Race hatred, the misery of the people, hungry women, starving children, homeless wrecks of humanity—these are the electioneering stage properties which the politicians use to gain public applause.

Such is government in the making. Let us now consider it as an accomplished fact.

We are told that if we took all the people of this world and murdered them, and then all the people of four or five similarly-populated worlds and treated them in the same cordial manner, we might, upon surveying our work, get some idea of the slaughter which man has inflicted upon man under the guardianship of his political institutions.

A glance at the Parliamentary debates, or a walk in any of our streets will remind us that the Governments of to-day are busy training men who are sworn to murder to order without discussing the rights of the quarrel. Government is, in fact, essentially a bomb-thrower. It will reward with a fortune any man who can furnish it with an improved explosive or a new instrument of destruction.

These are some of the most obvious characteristics of Government and politicians, and yet it is a curious fact that it is still to this institution and these men that the people turn when they wish any wrong righted or any reform instituted. So strong an influence has the habit of servility over us that

many even expect to gain freedom from some party whose sole object is to govern us. Hence the astonishing amount of energy expended in an election.

Let us now view the situation in the light of these facts. The Government of England to-day, fortunately for us, is weak; it is divided against itself. The capitalists of the Liberal Party, with the hero of Featherstone at their head and the well-trained Labour Party kept strictly to heel, are interested in a different branch of this system of exploitation from that with which the noble lords and the landlord class are concerned.

It is naturally irksome to the former, the "captains of industry," to be compelled to hand over to the landlords, as ground rents, royalties, etc., a large portion of the wealth produced for them by the workers; and hence we see the right honourable Lloyd George attempting to get a little back by the taxation schemes of the Budget, while on the other hand the struggle for existence urges these lords and landlords to strive to maintain the privileges granted them by the State in earlier days.

It does not need a political prophet to foretell that another General Election will take place before the world is much older, but nevertheless in the meantime we may grow wiser. We have seen and heard the campaign of lies carried on by these politicians seeking power until we have grown weary, and we have also seen that the power they seek, government, is the negation of freedom, and has been associated throughout history with organised, scientific murder on a large scale, and at the same time with an artistic hypocrisy with which it always convinced the people that it was acting for their welfare. Understanding this, we are not deceived by any party of politicians claiming as of old to act in our interest, but say distinctly that we, the workers, the class without property, will not assist any man in his attempts to gain a seat in Parliament.

While the politicians are discussing the right (of other men) to work, the housing, the feeding, and the clothing of the people, and whether this same "people" should be granted universal suffrage—i.e., the right to vote them into power—we, the people, will answer by our action:—